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FOR RELEASE: 15 April 1976

94-531

FROM: Kika de la Garza

Washington, D C

ANOTHER OIL EMBARGO by the Arab nations within the next three years is being predicted by some authoritative observers of the U S energy situation. And it is unfortunately true that the Nation has not adopted a realistic energy policy to lessen dependence on foreign imports. An estimated eight million barrels of oil are being imported daily. That amount represents an increase of 1.5 million barrels per day over 1973 levels when the crisis started.

We need policies which will lessen our dependence on foreign oil supplies, maintain reasonable energy policies, and help develop ways to advance international financial stability. These aims were not met by the Energy Conservation and Oil Policy Act passed by Congress near the end of last year (over my opposition). The effect of that law is likely to be to reduce domestic exploration and production and to increase U S dependence on foreign oil.

Domestic production of oil and gas should be encouraged. Our failure up to now to adopt sound national policies has weakened our ability to deal effectively with the foreign oil-producing countries. We have to do better and, for my own part, I will keep on urging action that will enable us to do better.

* * *

SOUTH TEXAS SCHOOLS eligible for Federal impact aid payments have received checks based on 50 percent of the amount due for the 1975 fiscal year, the U S Office of Education has informed me. Impact aid money compensates for the cost burden of schools with pupils whose children work or live on Federal property. Impact aid is of great importance to a number of school districts in our area.

Additional payments are scheduled to be made as soon as the computer system in the Office of Education becomes fully operational about 1 May. By 30 June, I was told, all eligible schools are scheduled to have received payments of 75 percent of their adjusted payment level based on 1976 data.

* * *

SUMMER JOBS (but not enough of them, I'm afraid) again will be available for high-school boys and girls through the Youth Conservation Corps program of the Department of the Interior.

Starting in mid-June, approximately 7,000 young people between the ages of 15 and 18 years will be employed for eight-week periods in 243 Interior Department Youth Conservation Corps camps on lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U S Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs. About another 7,000 are expected to be employed on National Forest

lands in Department of Agriculture camps and 10,000 more in state and territorial Youth Conservation camps.

The program is designed to fill the following basic needs: (1) accomplish needed conservation work on public lands; (2) provide gainful employment for young people; and (3) develop an understanding and appreciation in participants of the Nation's natural environment and heritage.

Eligibility requirements include the age limitation (15 through 18), no history of serious criminal or anti-social behaviour, and a Social Security number. Persons selected will be involved in such activities as building signs and marking nature trails, planting forestry seedlings, constructing water catchment basins, stocking streams with fish, painting buildings and fences, and cleaning up parks and recreational areas.

Applications are now being processed for this summer. Final selection of enrollees will be made at the State level and in most cases will be handled on a lottery system. South Texas boys and girls who are interested should apply to Glen McAllister, Office of Youth Opportunity, Department of Commercial Affairs, Post Office Box 13166, Capital Station, Austin, Texas 78711.

* * *

HOUSING LOANS by the Farmers Home Administration to families of low and moderate income for single family homes are now being made at an interest rate of 8 ½ percent, a reduction of one-fourth percent from the rate in effect since January 2nd.

The new rate applies to FmHA loans to eligible families for purchase or improvement of individual homes. Housing loans are administered by the agency in rural areas, including rural towns of not more than 10,000 population, and in certain designated towns and cities with populations between 10,000 and 20,000.

A nine percent rate will continue to be applied to FmHA loans for the development of rental and cooperative housing.

* * *

A LETTER came in the other day from a gentleman in South Texas about some of the rip-offs he sees being perpetrated by the Federal bureaucracy. I'm not much in disagreement with most of what he said, but I had no chance to say so because he failed to include his address. The envelope was postmarked all right, but postmarks aren't much help the way the U S Postal Service is sending letters to central mail processing centers. I want to answer all the letters I get, but I must have the full address. So -- once again -- please give me the information I need in order to reply and stay in touch with you about what we do about your suggestions and recommendations.

* * *

VISITORS FROM HOME: Visiting my office from home this week were: Hawley L Wolfe of Harlingen, now attending Cornell University; and James S Hotard of Port Isabel.

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